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ED ANDERSON....Don't take short cuts. (Photo by Allen Austin)

**NATIONAL FARM SAFETY WEEK**
SEPTEMBER 18 Th - 24 th

# Farm Safety Stressed in Appomattox County Schools, on Local Farms

Farm safety is, quite literally, the concern of everybody in the United States. The health and safety of our agricultural community is requisite for the continued nutritional health of urban and suburban people, as well as rural residents.

So Appomattox Countians join with other citizens across the United States in observing Sept. 18-24 as National Farm Safety Week.

The 40th Annual National farm Safety Week, as proclaimed by President Reagan, focuses on farm safety education, particularly youth education.

In Appomattox County, farm safety education has always been of major concern to the faculty and administration.

"Safety has to be a continuous thing," notes Dick Carter, director of Vocational Education in Appomatox County Schools. "You can't teach it this year, and forget about it the next."

Carter notes that the local school system has many farm safety programs. "We do many things to promote farm safety," Carter notes.

"The major concentration is on equipment safety, particularly on tractor safety. We have a 'safe tractor program', where students are certified to drive the tractors."

Carter adds that both the Middle School and High School FFA chapters have been recognized repeatedly in this part of Virginia for their farm safety achievements. "The senior chapter gets the FFA Farm Safety Award almost yearly," Carter notes. "The school system also promotes farm safety by recognizing an individual each year for his or her farm safety achievements," Carter adds.

"Safety on the farm is somthing you only have have to forget once," notes Carter. "you can practice it for umpteem years, then forget it once and it takes its toll. All of us are human, and prone to take short cuts. We think we can save time, but in the long run, the lack of safe procedures on the farm can be an expensive thing, in terms of down time of equipment and the loss of human resources."

Dennis Torrence and Henry Pack, two Appomattox County Farmers who formerly taught agricultural education, point out the diverse nature of farm safety concerns.

Torrence notes the necessity of safety when moving farm equipment over public roads. "The general public is still not as conscious of the slow-moving vehicle sign as it should be," Torrence notes. he says the farmer should take extra measures in insure his and others' safety when moving farm equipment such as tractors and combines.

"People respond quicker to flashing lights than to the triangular reflector signs," Torrence notes. "While flashing lights are not mandatory on farm equipment, I think their presence increased the driver's chances of safely transportins his equipment and he should take the inititative to insure his own personal safety, as well as that of others."

Pack notes that silo safety should always be in the forefront of farm operational procedures. "Silo safety is always important, but this year, with the extreme drought and consequent high concentrations of nitrogen in the silage, the farm worker should be extra careful when working in and around silos," Pack notes. He says that nitrogen gas levels can conceivably get so high in silos that they become toxic to humans.

Ed Anderson, an Appomatox County beef farmer and president of the Appomattox County Farm Bureau, adds that chemicals such as herbicides and pesticides should always be kept in safe places, and care should be used when working around farm animals.

"It's important to have a good set of working pens to avoid getting hurt by a 1200 or 1300 pound animal," Anderson notes.

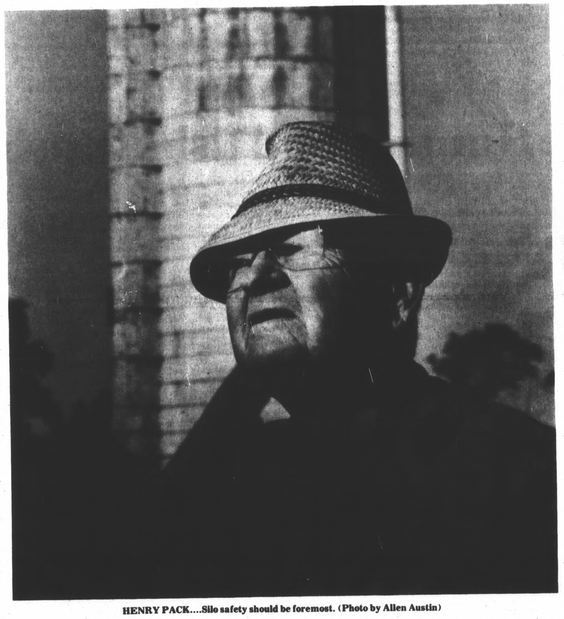
He adds that farm workers should not become careless during harvest and planting time, when activity on the farm peaks.

"The safety equipment, and the safety procedures usually listed on equipment are there are there for a reason," Anderson points out. "The biggest mistake a farm worker can make is to ignore safety procedures and cut corners trying to save time," he says.

As William D. Hanford, manager of the National Safety Council's Farm Department points out, "In most other occupations, trained people are responsible for the safety and health of workers. But in agriculture, the safety and health job falls to the farmer himself."

This magnifies the need for workers to be aware of safety risks, and to conscieniously practice safety procedures while on the farm.

As one old saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." And, on the farm, that ounce tarnslates into a happier life and more productive and efficient agricultural operation.



HENRY PACK....Silo safety should be foremost. (Photo by Allen Austin)

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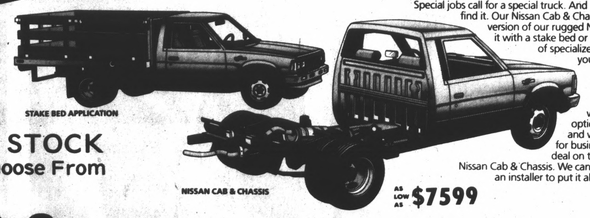
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